

SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, February 18, 2020, 5:30 p.m, Old Schoolhouse Common

Present: Selectboard members Richard Baker, Christopher Martin, and Laurie Colgan; Town Clerk Bobbi Brimblecombe; Visitors Kerri Smith, Jon Groveman, Drew McNaughton

At 5:30 p.m. the meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Martin

Changes or additions to the agenda: Truck bids, Stranahan report, highway grants, elevator contract, truck bill, update on abatement, date for town meeting

Public Comment: none

Review and Approval of Minutes: The Board approved the minutes of the February 4th meeting.

Gun Ownership: Kerri Smith asked the Selectboard to sign a non-binding resolution declaring Marshfield a 2nd Amendment and Article 16 gun ownership sanctuary town. She stated that it is a matter of civil disobedience, because the proponents do not support activities such as protests that block traffic, etc. They feel that it is better for the Selectboard to pass the resolution, rather than by a vote at Town Meeting, because they feel this is a natural right and not subject to popular vote. They would like to have resolutions passed before Town Meeting. Rich Baker stated that he is not in support of this based on negative personal experiences, and he feels that the Selectboard should not speak for the entire town. He feels that the voters should decide. He believes that the judicial system decides what is constitutional. Chris and Laurie stated that they do not feel comfortable making this type of decision for the town without input from the voters, regardless of their personal feelings. The Board declined to adopt the resolution.

Railroad Bed: Rich Baker updated the Board on his research and meetings with VTrans regarding the railroad bed and the section of Bailey Pond Road that lies between the railroad bed and Bailey Pond. It is clear that the railroad bed was adopted as a Class IV road in 1993. It is not clear why the section of Bailey Pond Road in that area was removed from the official highway map. It was never officially discontinued. He suggested discontinuing it now. Bobbi suggested changing it to legal trail. Jon Groveman urged the Board to be mindful of the recreational use of the area and to not give up the public right to the road. The Board decided not to do anything with Bailey Pond Road right now.

Rich recommends notifying Forest Farmers to tell them they have to remove the Private Road signs, and they have to get permission from the Selectboard to plow and make improvements to the Railroad Bed. He recommends not allowing the railroad bed to be plowed from the old depot to Bailey Pond.

Drew McNaughton asked the Selectboard whether they had permission to bury fiber optic lines because they put them through a wetland. Rich explained that the lines that were being buried are actually power lines, and GMP is upgrading the power in the area because the maple operation requires more power. There is no permit required from the Town for work in a wetland, but they

should have received a permit to work in the right of way. Drew is concerned that the power upgrade could lead to more development in the area. Jon and Rich indicated that current zoning would not allow anything but camps in that area.

Drew is also concerned about the lack of parking in the area. Rich found that the railroad bed is 3 rods wide, or almost 50'. Perhaps we could widen an area for parking along the road. Chris mentioned possibly building a parking area near the site of the old depot. Rich noted that the town owns 8 acres there, and the railroad bed there is 5 rods wide. He is wondering if the town should discontinue that part of the railroad bed so that the town could block vehicular traffic, since cars can bypass that section via Bailey Pond Road.

Rich noted that Forest Farmers is applying for the Forest Legacy program, which would allow permanent public access.

Drew would like to see more communication regarding the direction of the land. Jon suggested that the Board needs to let people know what the status of the road is. He suggested a post on Front Porch Forum.

The Board approved having Rich contact Forest Farmers to tell them to take the “private road” signs down, they can continue to plow the section of the railroad bed from the VAST trail intersection to Sleeper Road, but if they want to plow any other sections they will need to come to the Selectboard to explain why they need to.

Marshfield Dam: The Public Utilities Commission prepared a draft decision, authorizing Green Mountain Power to upgrade the service spillway this year, and they will issue a decision on the emergency spillway later. The Selectboard sees no reason to object to the draft decision.

Personnel: At 6:50, Laurie moved to enter executive session to discuss a personnel issue. Rich seconded – all in favor. The Board returned to open session at 7:30.

Truck bids: The Board received bids for a pickup and a dump truck. They will ask the Road Foreman to attend the March 17th meeting to discuss the bids.

Truck bill: Bobbi notified the Board that one of the town trucks went off the road and landed on its side. There was no damage to the truck. The Board will not submit an insurance claim for the towing bill.

Highway grants: The Board will invite Shawna Clifford, our VTrans District Technician, to come to the March 17th meeting to discuss highway projects.

Abatement: Bobbi updated the Board on the abatement request from the Christ Covenant Church. The Listers are seeking legal advice about how to handle the issues surrounding tax exempt status.

Date for Town Meeting: The Board will have an informal survey at Town Meeting to ask what

people think about changing the date. Laurie noted that Mike Caccavo scheduled a meeting to discuss how to revitalize town meeting, but only one person showed up.

Reappraisal: The Board received bids from Vermont Appraisal Company, New England Municipal Consultants, George E. Sansoucy, and Tyler Technologies. The Board will review the bids and ask the Listers to review them, and discuss them at their meeting on April 7th.

Expenses, Permits & Payroll: Selectboard members read and signed reports for General Expenses and Payroll.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Bobbi Brimblecombe, Town Clerk

The foregoing is a true copy of the Minutes of the February 18, 2020 Selectboard Meeting.
A True Record. Attest, _____, Town Clerk
